

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
CITY OF MILPITAS  
SISTER CITIES COMMISSION**

**Minutes:** Regular Meeting of Sister Cities Commission (SCC)  
**Date of Meeting:** Thursday, January 22, 2004  
**Place of Meeting:** Milpitas City Hall, 455 E. Calaveras Blvd., Committee Conference Room

**I. Roll** Chair Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners/Alternates Present: Arthur, Downey, Chahal, Garcia, Grilli, Iringan, Swiger  
Commissioners/Alternates Present: Mateo  
City Council Liaison Present: Bob Livengood  
MUSD Liaison Absent: Mike Mendizabal

**II. Alternates** Alternate Mateo was seated.

**III. Pledge** Chair Garcia led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. Minutes** **MOTION** to approve the Minutes of October 23, 2003.

M/S: Swiger/Iringan Ayes: All

**V. Agenda** **MOTION** to approve the January 22, 2003 agenda.

M/S: Swiger/Grilli Ayes: All

**VI. Announcements/Correspondence**

Staff announcements:

1) Jenifer Lind resigned from the commission due to her appointment to the Citizens Advisory Commission; 2) Reminder about 50<sup>th</sup> City of Milpitas Anniversary Celebration on Mon., 1/26/04 – commissioners may RSVP to staff; 3) Reviewed the commission packet and announced the Sister Cities International Art Competition and Annual Awards Program deadlines; 4) Distributed monthly dividers for commissioners' binders.

**VII. Citizen's Forum**

None.

**VIII. Elections**

Staff called for nominations of Chair. Debra Garcia was named.

**MOTION** to elect Debra Garcia as Chair of the Commission.

M/S: Chahal/Iringan Ayes: All  
Chair Garcia called for nominations of Vice Chair. Echo Arthur was named.

**MOTION** to elect Echo Arthur as Vice Chair of the Commission.  
M/S: Iringan/Chahal Ayes: All

## **IX. New Business**

### **1. GLOBAL VILLAGE EVENT: MAY 1, 2004**

Staff stated this event occurs every two years and asked for a volunteer from the commission to coordinate a booth display for each sister city. Arthur volunteered for Tsukuba; Iringan for Dagupan; and Garcia will assist as well. The event is scheduled from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Milpitas Sports Center Field. Volunteers from the commission are needed to host an exhibit, including set-up and breakdown. Swiger asked about selling items at the event, and Councilmember Livengood mentioned the need for a sales license. Vice Chair Arthur stated she would call the event coordinator and follow-up with a report at the February meeting. Staff noted the need for official sister cities to be represented.

## **X. Old Business**

### **2. 2004 DRAFT WORK PLAN REVIEW**

Staff requested commissioners be named as 'leads' for official and potential sister cities and that she receive comments on the draft.

Commissioner Grilli volunteered to coordinate the proposed MOU for Huizhou, China. Vice Chair Arthur will continue as lead for Tsukuba and both upcoming visits, and will have assistance from Chair Garcia and other commission members. Commissioner Iringan will continue as lead for Dagupan.

By consensus, the commission decided that the final version would be reviewed at the February meeting with a recommendation for adoption.

### **3. DAGUPAN CITY, PHILLIPINES: SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP**

Mayor Esteves and Vice Chair Arthur participated in a sister city visit on December 18 – 23, 2003, to Dagupan City. In addition, Romy Manuel from the Dagupan City Association of Northern California (DCANC) was present.

Vice Chair Arthur stated that representatives from Dagupan were very welcoming and professionally organized. She mentioned a concern about invitations that were sent outside of Milpitas, including invitations sent to people in San Jose and the Los Angeles area. She asked how much authority does Mayor Esteves have to invite non-Milpitas residents, and does the MOU provide invitation to everyone. Staff responded that Mayor Esteves may invite whom he pleases in his capacity as mayor of Milpitas.

Vice Chair Arthur continued: the visit went well, however, when there have been visits to the sister city in Japan, it was clear to everyone who was going to visit and that everyone was from Milpitas. Staff noted that the Pawil Festival may not have been the best way to kick off the sister city relationship with Milpitas. This important event to Dagupan draws people internationally. Dagupan officials may not have been able to totally devote their full attention to the Milpitas relationship. Iringan noted that he did not have any problems with this situation and asked if there were incidents where anyone did not conduct himself or herself properly. Vice Chair Arthur replied yes, and stated it was her understanding that a person from the

Los Angeles area had represented herself as being from Milpitas and a previous member of a Milpitas commission. It was clarified that this individual had been a Milpitas resident at one time.

Commissioner Iringan referenced a letter dated November 26, 2003, that Mayor Esteves signed. It was addressed to Mayor Lim of Dagupan. Staff noted that a copy of this letter was provided in the agenda packet. Iringan stated that the letter appeared open-ended in terms of whom Mayor Lim may invite to Milpitas. Discussion followed regarding the legitimacy of such a letter and any potential liability to the City. Staff stated that the letter was reviewed and approved by the City Attorney's Office prior to obtaining Mayor Esteves' signature. She referred to the City Attorney's opinion quoted in the staff memorandum, which was attached to this letter in the agenda packet. It is the opinion of the City that no liability exists to the City and that this is a legitimate letter for the Mayor to sign. Discussion followed regarding the need for specific letters of understanding between sister cities. Council member Livengood noted that detailed itineraries, along with names and titles of official visitors to Milpitas, need to be established before travel occurs. He also noted his concern about the letter appearing open-ended in terms of possible abuse. He stated that no one from another country should take any letter from the City of Milpitas, which was requested for sister city travel and bring it to the consulate just to visit the U.S. Any visits are to be directly focused on the sister city relationship. Chair Garcia stated that specific requests can be accommodated for sister city visits, and she agrees that it is inappropriate to use a sister city relationship with Milpitas for individual travel or gain.

Staff asked commissioner Iringan if he could speak with Dagupan's representative, Rafaael Baraan, to clarify this issue and determine Dagupan's understanding of this letter and report back at the February meeting.

Commissioner Swiger thinks this letter opens up the sister city process to be misused for illegal immigration. Again, Council member Livengood noted his concern about a general invitation that does not refer to specific dates and cultural events. He stated they may send visitors here, but only if it is directly related to the sister cities relationship. Iringan asked who wrote the letter. Staff responded that she wrote the letter, which was based upon a request from Dagupan. It was reviewed and approved by the City Attorney's office.

Staff noted that there had been past discussion of Mayor Lim visiting Milpitas in April. Council member Livengood stated the need to keep the relationship structured and to have specific events.

There was some discussion about sending a follow-up letter with revisions to clarify the invitation to Dagupan for sister city purposes. The commission will wait for a follow-up report from Iringan at their February meeting after he speaks with the Dagupan representative.

Staff noted that the budget is overextended this year due to the gift and shipping of the City of Milpitas' official gift to Dagupan City, and no funds remain. Staff distributed a table showing the gift and shipping costs. Vice Chair Arthur asked for financial assistance from the DCANC, stating her understanding that it had been this association's intention to provide financial assistance when it represented Dagupan's request for a sister city relationship with Milpitas. Mr. Manuel stated that he would be pleased to request this of the DCANC and reinforced the association's intention to assist with the visits as much as possible. Vice Chair Arthur mentioned a possible visit from Dagupan's Mayor in April and the need for financial assistance at that time. She also noted that the commission has always stayed within budget for the past seven years when visiting Tsukuba and reiterated the need to stay within budget for all sister city relationships and activities. Staff acknowledged that gift giving from a U.S. city may not always rise to the par of that of non-U.S. cities for important reasons. Council member Livengood asked for the commission to find out how many attendees will be visiting from Dagupan and Tsukuba and he will assist with fundraising efforts for gifts.

In terms of the Dagupan visit, Mr. Manuel does not yet know the number of visitors. He added that the visit may be pushed past the mayoral election in May. Iringan will follow-up with Mr. Baraan about dates.

Iringan also noted the need to ask financial support from the DCANC. Mr. Manuel mentioned that the association could help with accommodations as well. Swiger asked if the association could help reimburse a portion of the cost and shipping for the Dagupan gift. Mr. Manuel stated he would take this request to the DCANC. He also stated he would work with Iringan and Council member Livengood to pull funds together for future visits. Mr. Manuel also stated that the association would provide reimbursement to Vice Chair Arthur and Iringan for dinners they purchased for Dagupan visitors in October 2003.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION OF SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP: HUIZHOU CITY, CHINA**

At its July 24, 2003, meeting, the commission passed a formal recommendation to the City Council for a sister city relationship. At its September 25, 2003, meeting, the commission amended its approval recommending this relationship to City Council with Huizhou City to include a two-year duration and report to Milpitas City Council. Originally this item was to be placed on the February 17, 2004, City Council agenda, however, by consensus of the commission, this item was moved to March 2, 2004, so that Commissioner Grilli would be able to attend, as he volunteered to be the commission's contact person for Huizhou.

Staff noted that China does not have individual logos for its cities so such a symbol would not appear on the proposed MOU with Huizhou.

Frances Chien was present to represent the Huizhou-Milpitas Sister City Committee. Vice Chair Arthur noted assurances required of the committee to financially support visits. Mr. Chien stated that his committee would provide the necessary financial assistance.

Swiger, with consensus from the commission, requested to edit the memorandum in item 2, stating "each visit shall be reviewed in advance with the Sister Cities Commission and the Huizhou-Milpitas Sister Cities Committee." Staff will add this before preparation of the packet for the City Council. The edited MOU draft will be in the February agenda packet.

#### **5. RECOMMENDED SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP: TSUKUBA CITY, JAPAN**

**Background:** During its special meeting of Oct. 1, 2003, the commission received a request from Tsukuba officials to revise the current MOU. At the commission's direction, staff provided a redrafted MOU to Tsukuba representatives. Chair Garcia and Vice Chair Arthur have since been in contact with Tsukuba officials regarding comments and final approval. Chair Garcia received emails from Tsukuba officials requesting that the term end in December 2008 instead of 2009. Garcia asked for any comments or suggestions.

The commission concurred on an end date of December 2008. Garcia recommending putting this item on the February 17, 2004, agenda. Vice Chair Arthur noted that she would not be able to visit Tsukuba this year. Chair Garcia mentioned that her contact in Tsukuba is willing to help with translation and that she is planning on attending this year. Swiger asked if there is a way to get outside funding so that this responsibility does not fall heavily on two or more people. Staff stated that should a non-profit 501 (C) - 3 be formed to support sister city activities, it would be free to conduct its business as was noted during discussions last year. Vice Chair Arthur noted the need to send notices to schools.

Staff stated that the MOU signed by Mayor Fujisawa would be included in the Council's agenda packet for March 2., 2004. The commission could call a special meeting to do it's planning for this trip, or can plan separately and bring this item to the February commission meeting. Vice Chair Arthur noted that in March the airlines usually offer special discounts for travel through June. She volunteered to research this offline and report at the February meeting.

## **XI. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

Council member Livengood reported that usually the City Council hosts a dinner in January to thank all of the commission members for their service throughout the year. However, this year the event will be moved to late June for a barbeque celebration.

## **XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. 2004 Draft Work Plan Review (Feb.)
2. Standing Items: Sister City Relationships/Cultural Exchanges:
  1. Tsukuba Relationship & Cultural Exchanges
  2. Dagupan Relationship & Cultural Exchanges
  3. Recommended Sister Cities Relationship: Huizhou, China

## **XIII. Adjournment**

**MOTION** to adjourn.

M/S: Echo/Iringan                      Ayes: All

No further business was discussed with the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on February 26, 2004.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Cuciz  
Recording Secretary

Leslie Stobbe  
Staff Liaison